Request of Indian Sugar Mills Association

†3066. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Sugar Mills Association has requested Government to intervene to save the distressed sugar industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the policy followed by Government in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) to (c) Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) submit representations to the Government, from time to time, on various issues relating to sugar industry. These representations are duly considered and appropriate decisions taken thereon.

Foodgrains for Below Poverty Line people

3067. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of people living below the poverty line in the country;

(b) the steps taken by Government to eliminate poverty in the country;

(c) whether, in view of so much surplus supplies of rice, foodgrains and sugar in the country there is any scheme to supply these items at nominal prices to people below the poverty line through public distribution system; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) As per the poverty estimates of Planning Commission for the year 1999-2000, the percentage of poverty in the country is 26.10% (30-day-Recall period).

(b) The following programmes of the Government are aimed at eliminating poverty in the country :—

†Original notice of" the question was received in Hindi.

(i) Swaran Jayanti Gram SwarozgarYojana

(ii) Sampoorna Grameen RozgarYojana

(iii) Indira Awaas Yojana

(iv) Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)

(c) and (d) Under the Targeted Public Distribution System foodgrains and sugar are provided to Below the Poverty Line (BPL) and Antyodaya families at highly subsidized rates. The Central Issue Price of foodgrains for BPL families is nearly 45% of the economic cost of Food Corporation of India and that for AAY is nearly 21 % for wheat and 24% for rice.

Rice Scandal in FCI

3068. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that FCI had sold a large quantity of good rice to certain exporters instead of selling the same in the domestic market;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last two years;

(c) whether this scandal has recently come to Government's notice on account of stoppage of payment of those exporters;

(d) whether Government have instituted any enquiry into this scandal:

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether Government have received any report; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when it is likely to be received?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) and (b) FCI procures wheat and rice of Fair Average Quality (FAQ) all over the country for the Central Pool, which is offered both to exporters and domestic market. Exporters have been given the option of selecting stocks from Depots of their choice.

(c) to (g) Do not arise.